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PRESS RELEASE

USAID Plastic Recycling Project and Municipality of Kumanovo partner for preserving clean environment

USAID Plastic Recycling Project in partnership with the Municipality of Kumanovo, Public Utility Company "Cistota i zelenilo", NGO's "Lipa and "Vrama si" marked the beginning of the Municipal PET Collection Program in Kumanovo. The goal of this event was to promote the new communal infrastructure for primary selection of plastic that is part of the USAID grant and to promote plastic recycling as a sustainable business and appropriate waste management method. The public awareness campaign will be implemented by the NGO's "Lipa" and "Vrama si" from Kumanovo. Five primary schools will be introduced to the basics of plastic recycling during classes taught by USAID Plastic Recycling Project staff and partner NGOs.

"Through the USAID Plastic Recycling Project, we are helping the government, the municipalities, public and private utility services and schools in a joint effort to share resources and skills and to educate our children about preserving the environment. We are also supporting the development of a sustainable recycling industry which will generate revenue for the municipalities and provide jobs" said US Charge D'Affaires Mr. Thomas Navratil.

Upon successful completion of its pilot phase, in June 2008, the project expanded its activities to 20 new municipalities, including the municipality of Kumanovo. In the new phase, the project activities will focus on organizing clean-up actions, public debates focused on waste management with attention on plastic recycling, supporting partners in delivering educational classes, advocacy activities focused on broader engagement of citizens, NGO sector and local business in maintaining a clean environment.

The \$1.2 million USAID Plastic Recycling Project is implemented by Macedonian Business Resource Center- Trade and Investment Network (MDC-TI.Net) in partnership with 24 municipalities, as well as public or private waste management companies from each of these municipalities. The project has initiated plastic waste collection programs and Recycling Clubs in 14 primary schools, equipped 103 ecological Islands, and supported eight recycling companies with equipment purchase.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

The American people, through USAID, have invested nearly \$500 million in Macedonia since 1993. USAID is implementing projects that create jobs, reduce corruption, and prepare Macedonian students for the workforce. These initiatives improve the quality of life and support Macedonia's transition to a stable and prosperous democracy. USAID provides economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 100 countries. For more information please visit <http://macedonia.usaid.gov>.